

OFFICE OF REPORTS AND ESTIMATES

TRANSPORTATION GROUP

21 June 1949

Weekly Intelligence Summary No. 67

SECTION I. SUMMARY OF TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS

25X6A

The Czechoslovak Government has reportedly banned all sport flying in powered aircraft in an attempt to prevent the increasing number of escapes to the West by military and civilian pilots. (Item No. 2, B)

Recent Yugoslav attempts to establish direct air connections with the West mark another step in Tito's current tactic to establish closer Western ties as a countermeasure to the increasing Cominform pressures. (Item No. 3, A)

The latest development in the agitation for a tunnel under the English Channel was a meeting held on 25 April under the auspices of a private French parliamentary group which is studying this project. While it is reported that the parliamentarians favorable to the project may raise the question on their own initiative during the European Consultative Assembly session at Strasbourg, little progress is likely unless more powerful sponsorship develops in the UK and France. (Item No. 4, B)

3
DOCUMENT NO. 3
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐
☐ DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS, S, C
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 1987
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 3 Dec 79 REVIEWER: 006514

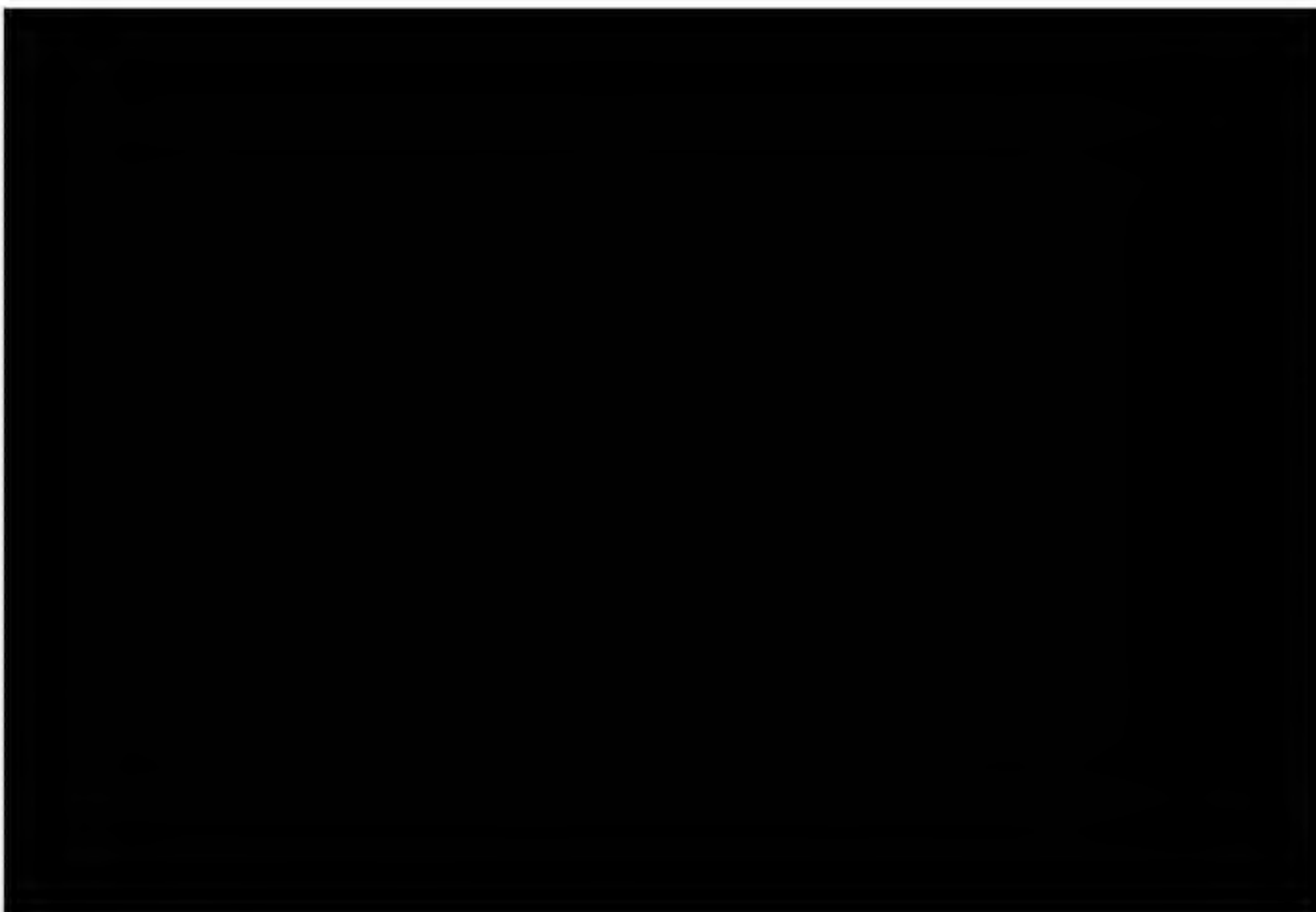
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECRET~~

- 2 -

SECTION II. CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

25X6A

CIVIL AVIATION



2. The Czechoslovak Government has reportedly banned all sport flying in powered aircraft in an attempt to prevent the increasing number of escapes to the West by military and civilian pilots. It is believed that the present ban (the third since the Communist coup in February, 1948) will not be lifted until now and more severe regulations are imposed on sport flying, and until a special action committee of the Czechoslovak Aeroclub has been appointed to review the political background and affiliations of all private pilots. The fact that Czechoslovakia has been forced to renew the prohibition on sport flying reflects the failure of ground and air detachments of the National Security

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

- 3 -

Corps (SNB) to prevent air escapes. Although poor Czechoslovak communications make interception difficult, this failure to cope with the problem may also stem from political unreliability of the SNB itself. (Confidential)

3. Recent Yugoslav attempts to establish direct air connections with the West mark another step in Tito's current tactic to establish closer Western ties as a countermeasure to the increasing Cominform pressures.

Having repeatedly pressed Italy for an agreement on commercial air services, the Yugoslavs have now approached the UK with an official proposal to reopen negotiations toward a UK-Yugoslav air transport agreement. Although air negotiations held with the UK in 1947 were abortive, the UK has indicated its willingness to discuss such an agreement on the condition, which was accepted by Yugoslavia, that simultaneous negotiations be held with the US. (European representatives of Pan American Airways believe that Yugoslavia may soon grant their company landing rights in Belgrade.) Yugoslavia has also initiated air discussions with Switzerland with a view to reaching an agreement on reciprocal air services between Belgrade and Zurich.

These overtures are probably motivated by the Yugoslav desire: (a) to secure assistance in rehabilitating Yugoslavia's civil air transport system; (b) to facilitate commercial exchanges with the West; and (c) to guarantee an air exit to the West in view of the possibility that Yugoslavia's present sole air route via Budapest and Prague may be closed to the Yugoslav airline as a result of the recent deterioration of Yugoslav-Hungarian air relations (See TG Weekly No. 64). (Secret)

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION

4. The latest development in the agitation for a tunnel under the English Channel (See TG Weekly No. 56) was a meeting held on 25 April under the auspices of a private French parliamentary group which is studying this project. The cost of a channel tunnel has been estimated at \$200 million, with a five year construction period. Proponents of the tunnel anticipate that a toll system would make the tunnel largely self-liquidating, and hope that the UK, France, and other continental countries will contribute to the cost.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

- 4 -

The recent meeting was attended by parliamentarians from Great Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Italy, all reportedly tunnel enthusiasts. After electing Senator Denvers from a channel district (Department du Nord) to the Conference chairmanship, the delegates heard an address by the President of the Federation Internationale de la Route (International Road Federation), which is reportedly the prime mover behind the tunnel project. A resolution was passed requesting the British and French Governments to consider the channel project and to submit it to the appropriate organs of the Brussels Treaty Group and the Council of Europe.

Military and civil authorities in the United Kingdom have not yet defined their attitude towards the tunnel and the French Government has shown no official interest. While it is reported that the parliamentarians favorable to the project may raise the question on their own initiative during the European Consultative Assembly session at Strasbourg, little progress is likely unless more powerful sponsorship develops in the UK and France. (Secret)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~